

April 2013 Newsletter

CIRM April Newsletter

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Board Approves Admendments to Bylaws in Response to Institute of Medicine Report

On March 19th, the CIRM governing board approved several amendments to its bylaws. These amendments were needed following the board's decision in January to endorse a series of changes in response to a report from the Institute of Medicine. The changes include: who can vote on funding issues, how scientific appeals are to be reviewed, the establishment of a Scientific Advisory Board, consideration of holding workshops and producing initiatives on ethics for research involving people, and several other changes.

- [Read our press release for more information about the amendments](#)

CIRM Banks on \$32 Million Toward a New Approach to Advance Research

At its March 19th meeting, the CIRM governing board also approved funding of an initiative to collect tissue samples from people who have different diseases, turn those samples into high quality stem cell lines - the kind known as induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC) - and create a facility where those lines can be stored and distributed to researchers who need them. Altogether nine different groups and organizations are involved in the collection, creation, storage and distribution of the cell lines. The initiative expects to create and store 9,000 cell lines, from 3,000 individuals, representing 11 diseases at a total cost of \$32.3 million. The cells will be genetically identical to the people who donated the samples, and will provide a way for researchers to study those diseases.

- [Read our press release](#)
- [Read our blog](#)

CIRM's Elevator Pitch Challenge Winner's Announced



At the 2013 CIRM Grantee Meeting in San Francisco, we hosted our first ever Elevator Pitch Challenge. The goal was to help researchers who get funding from CIRM do a better job of communicating with the public. We invited researchers to prepare a 30 second pitch, making sure to follow the basic outline of keeping it short, simple and something anyone can understand. We videotaped 43 pitches at meeting; 14 other researchers videotaped their own and sent them in online. We invited the staff at CIRM to vote on who they thought

did the best job. Jonathan Lam of UCLA won first place in the "non-lead scientist" category; Amy Sprowles of Humboldt State University captured first place for "lead scientist".

- Read our press release for a list of all the winners
- Read our blog about the event
- Read about staff picks from CIRM's Multimedia Editor, Science and Education Communications Officer, and Director of Public Communications Officer
- Watch videos of all the elevator pitches

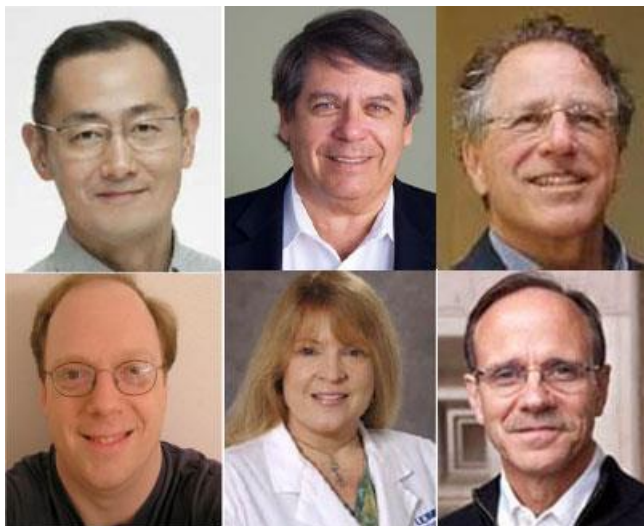
Stem Cell Agency Given National Honor for Advocacy in Scientific Research



On March 13th, CIRM was awarded the Paul G. Rogers Distinguished Organization Advocacy Award by Research!America, one of the most prestigious awards in public health. The annual advocacy awards, presented in Washington, DC, honor outstanding advocates for medical, health and scientific research, recognizing individuals and organizations who have been leaders in advancing the US's commitment to research. CIRM Chair Jonathan Thomas was in attendance to accept the award from Mike Castle, Research!America Board Vice Chair. Research!America is the nation's largest public education and advocacy group working to make health research a national priority.

- Read our press release and Chair Thomas' blog about the award

CIRM President Named One of the Most Influential in Stem Cell Field



In March, CIRM President Alan Trounson, PhD, was named the seventh most influential person in a global poll conducted by Terrapinn, an international business conference and exhibition organizer. Trounson was honored not just for helping make the stem cell agency, and California, a global leader in the field of regenerative medicine but also for his pioneering work in human *in vitro* fertilization. Fifty were chosen on the basis of their career achievements, groundbreaking discovery and research or innovation, as well as for their lifetime dedication and inspirational leadership. CIRM-funded Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, who won last year's Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, topped the list and Bob Klein, the author of Proposition 71, the voter-approved initiative that created the stem cell agency was named number 21 on the list. Fourteen others on the list are affiliated with CIRM.

- Read our press release and blog for more info about the survey's Top 50

Board Approves \$3 Million in Supplemental Funding to Support Stem Cell Therapy Development for Blindness

At its March 19th meeting, the CIRM governing board approved an Extraordinary Supplement Award of \$3 million to Dr. Mark Humayun and his team from the University of Southern California. Dr. Humayun has a Disease Team award to develop a stem cell therapy for dry Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD), one of the leading causes of vision loss in older adults. This supplementary award is to help them work through additional requirements and move this promising therapy closer to a clinical trial.

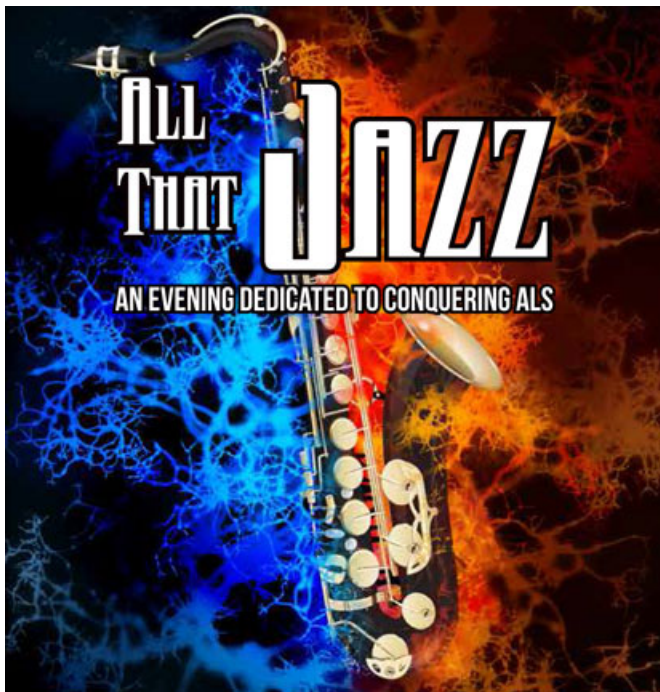
- Read our press release
- Watch a video describing the project

CIRM President Alan Trounson's Stem Cell Research Picks

Each month CIRM President Alan Trounson reports on advances in stem cell science by highlighting recently published papers from CIRM grantees and other leading research teams around the world. His March picks include a CIRM-funded study that reports the identification of a rare, adult cell type with the ability to become most, or perhaps all, cell types in the body. In another studies, teams from Netherlands and Oregon succeeded in isolating and growing liver stem cells in the lab, providing a first critical step toward using liver stem cells in therapy.

- Read about all the president's picks in his report
- Browse the president's stem cell picks archive

Board Member Diane Winokur and Stem Cell Scientist Shinya Yamanaka to be Honored at ALS Association GALA



Two good friends and supporters of the stem cell agency are being honored this month for their work in promoting stem cell research. Diane Winokur, the newest member of our governing board, the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), and Nobel Prize Winner Dr. Shinya Yamanaka are being honored by the ALS Association Golden West Chapter at a Gala Celebration at the Four Seasons Hotel in San Francisco on April 26th. Diane is getting the Lifetime Achievement Award for her personal and professional achievements in advancing the cause of ALS research and raising awareness about the disease. Dr. Yamanaka will be presented with the Commitment to a Cure Award for his pioneering work in discovering how to transform adult skin cells into embryonic-like stem cells. Congratulations to both.

- Read more details about the event

Upcoming CIRM Events

April 15th: Webinar - Clinical Trials: Moving Stem Cell based Therapies to the Clinic - Presentations from FDA and Leading Experts.
10:00 - 12:00pm (Pacific Time) **Advanced Registration is required**

May 22nd and 23rd: The CIRM governing board will hold its 3rd meeting of 2013 at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. The agenda and

details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

CIRM Funding Opportunities

RFA 13-01: CIRM Disease Team Therapy Development Awards III - Applications due 5:00 pm (PDT), May 15, 2013. Only those applicants that submitted a letter of intent (LOI) that was accepted by CIRM may submit an application. Applicants will be notified if their LOI was NOT accepted. CIRM conducted a webinar on Wednesday February 6, 2013 to provide information regarding RFA 13-01 including tips to potential applicants, an overview of the application process and questions from applicants. Click [here](#) to review the archived materials from this webinar.

RFA 13-02: CIRM Basic Biology Awards V - Invitations for Full Applications will be sent out May 24, 2013. Only accepted from applicants who submitted a Preliminary Application.

PA 12-08: CIRM Patent Assistance Fund Awards - Application opportunities on a monthly basis until June 30, 2014
Eligibility: Only Technology Transfer Officials at current CIRM Grantee institutions are eligible to apply for funds under this program.

PA 08-06: CIRM Conference Grants - Applications for conference grant awards will be accepted, reviewed and approved on an ongoing basis. To ensure that a decision is made within a timeframe that will allow for appropriate conference planning, it is recommended that there be at least four months between receipt of an application and the start date of the scientific conference.

Get more info about CIRM RFAs
[Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements](#)

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